



Restaurant Eating Tips

Enjoy the Foods You Love Without a Calorie Overload

You'll find dozens of ideas here for eating delicious restaurant foods without blowing your diet—but most importantly, remember these two tips:

1. If you are going to eat out, think about what you are eating the rest of the day so you can plan well and not blow your “calorie budget”.
2. Have it your way. Restaurants are in the business of serving customers. Don't be afraid to ask for items specially prepared the way you want them.



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The Plan: When you know you're going to eat out, think about what foods you'll choose over the whole day. For example, plan on a light lunch if you'll eat out at dinnertime. Try not to skip meals, which may make you overindulge later. And most importantly, try not to show up at the restaurant famished! If you'd like to splurge on a higher calorie entrée, plan to skip dessert, and commit to sticking to your plan once in the restaurant.

Ordering Tips: Eating out doesn't have to wreak havoc with your diet. Try some of the following tactics to help make restaurant foods fit into your own eating plan.

- Order [regular portion sizes](#) instead of the jumbo sizes now common. Try an appetizer, half an entrée, or share a meal with a friend and order an extra side salad. Ask for half the entrée to be wrapped up to go before the food is brought to the table.
- Get exactly what you want by ordering each item separately (a la carte). For example, one chicken enchilada easy-on-the-sauce, side salad, and fruit desert instead of the # 8 enchilada plate with rice, beans, sour cream, guacamole, etc.
- Learn to spot which dishes are made with lower calorie cooking methods.
- Ask how dishes are prepared and can they can do it your way: grill the chicken, steam the vegetables, bring sauces and salad dressings on the side, put just a dollop of cream

sauce on the pasta primavera and extra grilled vegetables.

- Don't tempt yourself! Have the waiter remove the bowl of chips or peanuts, or the basket of bread, after you've had a small portion. Calories from mindless nibbling can add up before you know it. Don't sit near the desert cart.
- Limit alcohol. It's high calorie, has few nutrients, and can weaken your will power.

Good Menu Choices: The following foods and methods of preparation are likely your best choices to help you stay within your healthy eating plan.

- Clear broth-based **soups** like Chinese won ton or hot and sour soup, consommé, tortilla soup, or minestrone.
- Lettuce or spinach **salads** with vegetables and dressing on the side. Go easy on the bacon bits, croutons, cheese, and mayonnaise-based items like macaroni salad or tuna salad (1/4 cup tuna salad = 190 calories).
- Raw **vegetables** (crudités) with a small amount of low-calorie dip.
- Steamed vegetables with a slice of lemon; grilled veggies if not drenched in oil.
- **Meats** that are grilled, broiled, roasted or baked without added fat. Choose **seafood** that is broiled, baked, steamed, blackened, or poached—think tender sole poached in parchment with broth, savory vegetables and herbs.
- A reasonable portion of **steak** – 3-6 oz.; other lean meat cuts served au jus, with a piquant fruit sauce, or stir-fried with vegetables. Again, go easy on the rich sauces.
- A baked **potato** with a pat of butter or small amount of sour cream. Top with broccoli, low-fat chili, or salsa .
- **Sandwiches** on whole wheat, pita, multigrain breads; with low-fat deli meats and cheeses; mustard, relish, ketchup, or low-fat mayonnaise. Add flavor and vitamins with roasted sweet peppers, lettuce, tomato, jalapenos, and chopped olives (small amount).
- Fresh fruit, sherbet, and angel food cake are good choices for **dessert**.

Hidden Calories: Look for the following descriptions to uncover higher calorie menu choices: pan-fried, sautéed, battered, breaded, au gratin, cheesy, creamy, buttered, deep-fried, béarnaise, or crispy—as in the "crispy," *deep-fried* tortilla bowl holding the salad.

Fast Food: It's fast! It's easy! It tastes good! There are lots of reasons why people cruise through fast food restaurants. "I'm trying to lose weight," is not usually one of them. While the occasional burger and fries won't wreak havoc with your waistline, eating at fast food restaurants regularly might.

Check out the calorie counts to the left for some of your favorite fast foods—and think about how you can make some choices that can easily trim calories, but still give you that fast, easy, cheap, tasty fix you're looking for.

Menu Item	Calories
Hamburger	— 270
Cheeseburger	— 320
Double cheeseburger	— 600
Double cheeseburger with bacon	— 640
Fish sandwich with sauce	— 430
Breaded chicken sandwich	— 515
Grilled chicken sandwich	— 310
Chicken nuggets (6 pieces)	— 300
Baked potato, plain	— 310
Baked potato with cheese	— 570
Chili, small (8 oz)	— 210
Chili, large (12 oz)	— 310
Fries, small	— 210
Fries, large	— 450
Fries, super	— 540
Onion rings	— 310
Soda, small (16 oz)	— 150
Soda, medium (21 oz)	— 210
Soda, large (32 oz)	— 310
Chocolate milkshake, small	— 360
Vanilla milkshake, small	— 310
Hot fudge sundae	— 340
Fruit pie	— 290
Skip This/ Try Instead	Calories Saved
Double cheeseburger/ cheeseburger	280
Super fries/ small fries	330
Large soda /medium soda	100
Large soda/ diet soda	310
Breaded chicken sandwich/ grilled version	205

Mexican Food: Eating light at a Mexican restaurant can be done.... with the right choices. Steer yourself toward burritos, soft tacos or fajitas, rather than hard shell tacos and crispy tortillas that are high in fat. If you have a choice of beans, go for the pinto or black beans, rather than their high-fat counterpart – refried beans. And add some fresh salsa to your dishes

– tastes great, and contributes to your vegetable count for the day!

A few restaurants do make their Mexican dishes with health in mind. Look for:

- Brown rice, no-fat black beans, lower-fat cheese,
- Whole-wheat tortillas, corn tortillas, soft tacos,
- Marinated vegetables, grilled chicken, fish Vera Cruz style,
- Fish tacos (grilled fish, coleslaw light on mayonnaise, chopped tomato, salsa)
- Sour cream blended with non-fat yogurt, baked chips,
- And of course salsa—so low in calories you can use it on everything.

Italian Food: Dishes that originated in southern Italy may fit nicely in a weight control diet, provided they're true to their origins. Southern Italians traditionally ate mostly pasta, bread, beans, vegetables, fruit, and olive oil. This Mediterranean diet has been described as a one way to avoid heart disease.

In contrast, northern Italian cuisine uses more meats, cheeses, and breaded items. So look for the following menu items and keep portion size reasonable.

- Pasta E Fagioli (flavorful entree with white beans)
- Minestrone soup
- Salad, dressing on the side
- Crusty bread, go light or skip the butter and olive oil
- Pasta with marinara (red sauce)—add meatballs but skip the meat sauce, or try red clam sauce instead.
- Pasta primavera if made without a cream sauce
- Chicken or veal cacciatore (tomato based sauce)
- Chicken marsala, if made with wine and broth rather than butter or cream
- Fruit for desert

No matter what type of restaurant you choose, choose wisely once inside.

http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_3_2x_Restaurant_Eating_Tips_Mar_03.asp

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